

Customer Service Overview

Who Are WIC Customers?

Module I (2 hours)

Judith Cayton
Nutrition Training Specialist
Training Section
Bureau of Clinical and Nutrition Services
Texas Department of Health
June 1997

Instructor Guide



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IV. Supplementary Materials (Separate from this Module)

- Overhead Projection Transparency Masters
- Trainee Workbook Master for Photocopying

Customer Service Overview

Customer Service. What does it have to do with WIC? Everything! We at WIC are focusing on providing great customer service to both our external WIC customers and our internal WIC customers.

This course is just one module of a multi-course customer service curriculum. We suggest this as the first module to introduce customer service and as a good review. Look for other modules in the series.

Notes to Supervisors and Trainers

As a supervisor, you play a very important role in creating a customer-oriented WIC clinic. Without your involvement, this training will be much less effective. How can you make it effective?

First, you are a role model...

for all of the customer service skills and attitudes discussed here. In fact, according to research* the Number One predictor of whether or not an employee will go above and beyond simply fulfilling the most basic job requirements is having a manager who models great service to customers and co-workers.

Second, you provide a clear link...

between the material and the WIC experience in your clinic. You can make it real for your employees in a way no one else can.

Third, give feedback...

Coaching, recognizing and correcting are important aspects of feedback. You can keep the goal of good customer

service in front of your employees. Recognize employees' efforts!

Planning Your Training Session

Preparation will help your training go more smoothly and effectively. As you read through this material, think about your own experiences as a customer and in the clinic. Write down examples from your experiences, from other clinics, and even other industries. They will help your participants connect what they hear with what they do in the clinic.

Designing Your Program

Here's a simple format you may wish to use or modify to fit your needs.

1. Introduce the training
2. Go over the material in each section
3. Complete the exercises and discussion for each section
4. Summarize the key points of the module

In your introduction, explain why customer service training is important to your WIC clinic and the advantages to them as individuals. Clearly state the course objectives and what participants will gain.

Customer service training should be a positive strategy with emphasis on striving for excellence, not an opportunity to point out mistakes or “fix” bad attitudes.

Here are several things you can do to make the training/job link strong.

1. Have the employee teach others three key things he or she has learned at the end of the training.

2. Have the employee keep a journal or log of techniques used to turn difficult customer situations around. Ask the employee to make frequent entries and review it with them.
3. Devote time in staff meetings to talk about the importance of excellence in customer service. Mention customer service issues, opportunities, even challenges at staff meetings and solicit their creative ideas on meeting those challenges. Encourage the sharing of positive stories and asking questions about handling specific concerns.
4. When an employee asks “What should I do?” encourage him or her to think of possible actions; then help him or her to choose the best one.
5. Allow room for error. Give feedback in a way that helps employees learn rather than feel rebuked or punished.
6. Publicly recognize employees who practice great customer service skills.

Training Logistics

Give some thought to the size of your group and the room arrangement. Keeping groups small (15-20) allows more interaction. Seating participants in groups of 5 to 8 at round tables allows them to work together on exercises.

Make sure everyone can see the flip chart, white boards, overhead projections (a screen provides much better images than projecting on a wall) and the VCR television screen if you use one.

Check your equipment before the session to make sure all bulbs, extension cords, etc., are in order and that any videotape you use is rewound.

Be sure to:

- # Make three copies of the Role-Play referenced on page 13.
- # Make enough copies of the Customer Service Overview

Workbook so that each participant can have one and can take notes.

Make overheads from masters.

Objectives

At the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- # Identify who their customers are and what products, services or information they provide to their customers.
- # Understand the impact of good and bad customer service.
- # Learn what a customer-friendly WIC clinic could be like and what each of them can do in their positions to help create one.

Equipment Required

1. Flip chart or white board & markers
2. Overhead projector and screen
3. VCR and monitor & videotape (optional)

Time Required

This is designed as a 2 hour training with one 15-minute break.

This is an estimated time. If you incorporate more lengthy exercises or have a large group (30 or more), it could require more time.

I. Introduction

- ' *Hand out copies of the Customer Service Workbook.*
- ' *Tell the class they can take notes in workbook.*

Make the following point:

Providing great customer service is a critical part of every job of every WIC employee.



That's a pretty big statement.

Why is it true?

Case load, people coming into our clinics and returning, pays our salaries and keeps our doors open. Treating customers well also makes for a more pleasant experience for everyone, employees included.

Go over the course objectives with the class:

At the end of today you will be able to:

- # Identify who your customers are and what products, services or information you provide to them.
- # Understand the impact of good and bad customer service.
- # List at least 3 things you can do in your job to help create a customer-friendly WIC clinic.

II. Who Are Our Customers

[15 min.]

Q:

What is a Customer?

Ovh 1.1

Write answers either on flipchart or overhead.

“Someone to whom we provide a service, product, or information.”

Q:

Who Are Your Customers?

Ovh 1.2

Write their answers on the flip chart or overhead.

Keep in mind that almost everyone has internal as well as external customers. (Each participant will have a slightly different list.)

Clients, staff, co-workers, doctors, vendors, other health department programs, the State WIC Office, other local agencies, other social service agencies.

Q:

What do we at WIC provide: What products, services or information?

Ovh 1.3

Write their answer on the flip chart or

overhead.

Nutritious foods, referrals, immunizations, nutrition education, information on child's health

Q:

How do our customers “pay” us? **Ovh 1.4**

Time, compliance, tax dollars, referrals to other potential clients, ultimately with our jobs.

Ovh 1.5

Make the point:

Ovh 1.6

We've all been customers at hundreds of different places

Think back on the last time you had *really good* customer service...

Q:

What made it great customer service?

Write answers either on flip chart or overhead.

Employee was fast, courteous, smiling, empowered, greeted me, asked questions, listened, was knowledgeable about products, went above & beyond the call of duty, flexible, patient, looks for an answer, good hygiene, efficient.

Compare that with the last time you had *really poor* customer service...

Q:

What made it poor?

Ovh 1.7

Write their answers on the flip chart or overhead.

Ignored, bad attitude, rude, waited, inconvenient, wrong directions, not knowledgeable, bad hygiene, can't do it, didn't care, no explanation, no greeting, no follow-through.

Discuss, making the following points:

Look at the differences. Does the poor customer service come from poor products? No! Rarely are customers disappointed in the product or the Basic Offering. It's the human side of the transaction that really affects how the customer feels. Fortunately, that's the side over which you have the most control. With WIC you mostly can't control the product because the food packages are set. But we have lots of control over how we interact with participants.

III. Customer-Friendly WIC Clinics



What can we do to make our clinics more customer-oriented?

Ovh 1.8

Write headings "WIC Clinic" & "Customer-Oriented WIC Clinic" on the flip chart or board and write their answers in the correct column.

WIC Clinic	Customer-Oriented WIC Clinic
# food	# courtesy
# nutrition education	# easy to understand signs
# referrals	# bilingual staff
# immunizations	# listening
#	# clear explanations
#	# offer options
#	# answer questions
	# kid friendly
	#
	#
	#

Ex: Tell the class:

I'd like for each of you to take a few minutes to think about your individual jobs; the work you do every day. I want you to come up with *at least 5 ways* in which you could make your job more customer friendly.

Put yourself in a client's place and see if you can see where you can make a difference. For example, if one of my job responsibilities is weighing and measuring, I might put something on the scales to keep it from being so cold to the babies. I might have something interesting for children or babies to view while they are being weighed and measured. I might decide to use a children's music tape as a distraction. I want you to stretch with this exercise!

Don't just say "smile, be pleasant, be patient." Try to think of things particular to your job.

Give the class 5 minutes to come up with their lists

Now I want you to form in groups of 5 to 6 people per group. Each person takes a turn. In one minute tell what ideas you came up with for making your job more customer- friendly. Then, as a group, take 3 minutes to brainstorm great customer service ideas for the person who just shared. Remember the rules of brainstorming: *no judging of ideas, build on other people's ideas, try for as many ideas as possible, no judging of ideas.* When I call time, go on to the next person.

Break

During the break see if you can get 2 people to role play the scene on pages 17-18.

Ex: Role Play

Have two participants act out the role play.

After the role play, ask the following questions and discuss the answers.

Q: What did the clerk do that was not customer-friendly?

Clerk was rude to the customer on the phone in front of new client, did not greet the client, was dressed inappropriately, drank Coke, did not offer the client choices, ordered her around, was not empathetic, did not really listen, didn't care.

Q: Mrs. Smith, how did you feel?

What was the effect of the clerk's behavior on Mrs. Smith?

Mrs. Smith was offended, hurt, insulted, and may not return—she'll spread the word!

Q:

What might have made the clerk behave that way?

The clerk might have been having a bad hair day, her husband or her boss may have yelled at her, her car may have broken down, she may be ill. Whatever the reason, it's invisible to the customer—all she knows is that she's not being welcomed.

Q:

What did Mrs. Smith want from the clerk?

She wanted three basic things: respect, acceptance and some control.

Q:

What could the clerk have done to satisfy Mrs. Smith's requirements?

The clerk could have listened empathetically, greeted Mrs. Smith even if with a nod and smile, offered her the options to come back on another day if it looked like it would be a long time.

Ex:

Better Client Service in 30 Days

I want you to choose one idea you or your group generated on how to better serve clients. Write it down. In 30 days we will get together and see if it made a difference.

Q:

Are there any questions?

Make the following point:

Remember, you can make all the difference!

**Ovh 1.9
(Attitudes)**

Dismiss the class

Role Play:

The Case of the Careless Clerk

ANNOUNCER: The Nowhere, Texas WIC Program is a large one in a big metropolitan area. A WIC applicant enters. She is clearly a bit rushed and is not sure which way to go, this being her first visit to a WIC Program. She eventually sees the reception area and hurries toward the desk.

The WIC intake clerk, dressed in jeans with holes in them and chewing a big wad of gum, is on the telephone.

CLERK: *to the telephone mouthpiece*

Well I'm sorry you missed your appointment...It isn't my fault. You'll just have to make other provisions for getting your baby formula until we can see you, which can't be before the middle of next month. There's no point in getting upset. There's nothing I can do. Bye.

She makes a face at the telephone mouthpiece as she replaces it on the cradle, shifts a few files from the mountain of paperwork on her cluttered desk and begins making a note of the telephone call.

The client, shifting her weight from one foot to the other, thinks she'd better let the WIC clerk know she has arrived as, up to this point, the clerk has not acknowledged her in any way.

MRS. SMITH: Ummmm, my name's...

CLERK: Just a moment.

She takes a swig from her Diet Coke®, tosses her hair back and, for the first

Discussion Questions

1. What could the clerk have done differently?
2. What was the effect on Mrs. Smith?
3. What might have made the clerk behave that way?
4. What did Mrs. Smith want from the clerk?
5. What could the clerk have done to satisfy Mrs. Smith's requirements?